

# MANAS

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## HELD FOR RANSOM

IT has been many times suggested in these pages that the war of ideologies, although today engaging in superficial if intense conflict the emotions and energies of many millions of human beings, is a war which misses the real point of the human situation. While the issue of freedom is a real issue, and the issue of a just distribution of the goods of this world is a real issue, neither one, we submit, has, can, or will be settled by the destruction, adoption or reform of any particular socio-economic system.

We should like to approach this problem in extremely simple terms—the terms of what the Quakers, and the Buddhists before them, have spoken of as the principle of “right livelihood.” This is a way of saying that the motives men embrace for their practical, day-to-day activities of making a living, trying to accumulate wealth, or, it may be, of bettering their status in the managerial bureaucracy, are decisive factors in determining the quality and atmosphere of a human society. It hardly needs pointing out that the acquisition of the instruments of economic production by the State has done very little to transform those motives. The men in both capitalist and socialist orders still seek the same kind of material security, fear the same deprivations, and recognize the same kind of power as important in their attempts to make the world “safe” for their kind of society. While differing social systems in the long run undoubtedly do place the stamp of certain attitudes upon the people that live under them, the question remains: Are those attitudes sufficiently different for one to be greatly elevated above the other as an ideal?

Let us establish some primary criterion for judging a social system—a criterion which passes by the “slogan” forms of social criticism and avoids, therefore, the familiar rhetoric of political controversy. The principle preached and practiced by the great American educator, Bronson Alcott, seems as good as any. Never, he admonished, do for money what is not worth doing for its own sake. To make the application broad enough to include the emoluments of a managerial society, the principle could also be formulated: Never do for power or status what would not be worth doing, anyhow, regardless of the kind of reward that may be forthcoming.

Reflection on this principle soon transports us to the useful if entirely imaginative desert-island economy,

where practically none of the cultural institutions which now dominate our lives would be present. No liquor industry, no cosmetic industry, no advertising agencies, no literary coteries, no organized vice, and none of an incalculable number of other activities catering to appetites and weaknesses which come into prominent play only in a society where there is a highly developed technology. We speak of a technology of which the skills and productive capacities have been evolved to satisfy the characteristic cravings, to shield the characteristic timidities, and to play upon and exploit the characteristic rivalries and ambitions of the large mass of people who have become “adjusted” to the theory of “happiness” which now prevails.

Technology itself, of course, is not the Evil One. But technology has created those massive fixtures and patterns of activity which bind us to the great statistical averages of human motivation. It is technology which insists upon a hideous similarity in what men do to make a living—the similarity which results from the necessity to “make a profit.” The craftsman, for example, is confronted by the department store buyer or the purchasing agent of a chain. The film producer must govern his choice of story, treatment, cast, according to the specifications of those who are to market the picture. The individual exhibitor, in turn, is very largely bound by the sales policies of the large studios, often involving what the industry calls “block booking,” obliging the exhibitor to accept a certain number of films he doesn’t want in order to get those he does.

To abolish technology is hardly the way to erase these evils. Nothing short of a natural catastrophe of appalling dimensions—or, perhaps, a number of “well-placed” atom bombs—could eliminate technology from our society. Further, a critic of this system is in the peculiar position of viewing with alarm a situation with which large numbers of people have little or no fault to find at all. In fact, even to “want” these things eliminated may constitute a variety of paternalistic egotism that would, in the end, create far worse evils than those we have. It is one thing to differ with the public taste, and another thing to be determined to reform the public taste, by fair means or foul. To substitute the power motive for the profit motive would be a dubious advantage. The power-seeking individual or group finds it necessary to exploit and



## Letter from

# JAPAN

TOKYO.—John Foster Dulles, special envoy of President Truman assigned the task of working out a peace settlement for Japan, said recently, "I have seldom seen any country in all my life where there is as little evidence of militarism as there is in Japan today." Many people may interpret this statement by the eminent American statesman as his attempt to allay the fears of many of Japan's neighbors who still have vivid memories of the ruthless Japanese military machine.

Actually there seems to be more to it than that. It is generally accepted here that Japan will have to rearm at some time in the future. But the people will certainly resist pressure in that direction as long as they can. Now, it is common knowledge that during his two trips to Japan in the past half year Mr. Dulles tried to convince Japanese leaders—not too successfully—that Japanese rearmament is inevitable. At that time, he pointed out in several public statements that the United States would make available American troops to guarantee Japan's security for the time being, but that the U. S. would not give Japan a "free ride" in this respect indefinitely, and it was clearly indicated that Japan must look after her own defense in the future by furnishing ground troops to man her borders.

The temper of the Japanese people today, however, is such that they are not jumping at this "opportunity" to rearm. And Mr. Dulles says truthfully—perhaps ruefully—that there is no country "where there is as little evidence of militarism as there is in Japan today." Even Prime Minister Yoshida, a staunch conservative and con-

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use the political weaknesses of people instead of their merely human weaknesses. Just as the profit-seeker studies human nature to find its vulnerable points of sale, so the professional reformer, the advocate of state-control to *make* men less acquisitive, more just to their fellows, eventually creates a mythology of pseudo-reality to convey the impression that the means and methods he has chosen for reform are in all things the Way, the Truth, and the Light. Initially, he may have some doubts about this, but the exigencies of having to "convert" large numbers of people virtually compel him to use lower and lower common denominators, until, finally, he has transformed himself into an expert Machiavellian. In time, the Machiavellian techniques infect more and more members of the society. The result, in practical terms, is a Nazi or Communist Party, complete with secret police, Father- or Hero-Image, Holy Writ, and Party Line. It is probably even more difficult for a man to do what he thinks is really worth while, under the rule of a collectivist government, than it is in a profit-consecrated capitalist society.

So, it seems, we are all of us held for ransom, regardless of where we live and what sort of economy or govern-

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sidered a reactionary by the progressives here, has reportedly put Mr. Dulles off by pointing out that the time is not yet ripe to broach the subject of rearmament to the Japanese people. But it is felt—fatalistically—by the majority of the people that the time must come in the future when they must once again take up arms.

Some Americans here have voiced impatience over the complacency of the Japanese people despite the war in Korea—and despite all that American dollars have done to help the people in the postwar period. Others have complained that the indoctrination of the Japanese against war and militarism in the early days of the Occupation was so thorough that the Japanese will not fight now for any cause or reason. To them, the rearmament of Japan is a calculated risk which has to be taken to win the inevitable struggle against communism. They are critical of the lack of foresight in the days following the end of World War II in not realizing the fundamental impasse between democracy and communism.

But it was more than SCAP "indoctrination" which has led the Japanese people to abhorrence of war. They were ready for it after the terrible beating they took and the suffering they went through during the war years. And there was the shock of war defeat and of frustration. Now, the people enjoy the freedom of being without an armed force and of not having to go through military training, and, most important, of not paying the taxes to keep up a military establishment. The tax load is extremely heavy now—a wage-earner getting 24,000 yen a month (about \$66) pays 50 per cent of it back in taxes. The people couldn't stand any more taxes, although the cost of maintaining the Occupation will presumably be eliminated after the peace treaty.

There is, however, every indication now that steps are being taken to soften up the public for a rearmament program. An SCAP official said before a Tokyo Youth Forum recently—and his address was carried in the English-language *Nippon Times*—that rearmament is inevitable for Japan to contain Communist Russia. "Logic and right," he said, "indicate that the defense of Japan from Communist aggression as well as the defense of Japan's free neighbors is a burden and solemn obligation that should be shouldered by the Japanese people." And he added, "Japan, as the most advanced nation in Asia technologically, can play a leading and most indispensable role in the over-all economic development of Asia. . . . In addition, a strong and free Japan can play an equally vital role in the political stabilization of the Far East." For anyone who has read any of the writings of the Japanese apologists for the aggressive policy of prewar days, these statements should have a familiar ring.

Again, the SCAP headquarters has given a go-ahead sign for a sweeping "depurge" of about 170,000 persons who had been disqualified from public posts because of their role in aiding Japan's military expansion. They include, of course, former officers of the army and navy, who will be useful if the nation should rearm—and the Japanese are aware of this "hint." Of course, a "purge" in itself is hardly an instrument worthy of democratic traditions. But it is ironical that while many of the wartime military collaborators are being depurged, Com-



## THE DOOM AND THE GLOOM

IN one of the first issues of MANAS an attempt was made to review what was then called "The Cult of Frustration." We noted the climate of emotion which, in a world of tragic politics, individual neurotic tensions, and man-is-animal theories, gave the dark side of life a peculiarly inverted "romance" of its own. In book-making, for instance, it may be claimed as a self-evident fact that these factors, and an accompanying bent for iconoclastic realism in art, make unhappy or sordid endings to stories commonplace. In turn, the literature that men prefer tells quite a bit about what people expect their own lives to become, and those who feel "at home" with endlessly frustrated heroes and heroines—who are not heroes or heroines in the classic sense at all—probably expect frustrated lives themselves. At any rate, happy-ending stories and optimistic views of society in general have not been much in vogue.

It seems obvious that it is a very poor thing for people to be willing to accept the Gloom and Doom atmosphere, and especially for them to revel in it. In fairness, however, we have to recognize certain critical accomplishments of this peculiar cycle of disenchantment, even though these come from honest probings for truth, never from pessimism. At least the work of laying bare the cant and hypocrisy of self-righteous respectability is no longer left to a few unusually perceptive authors such as

munists, their sympathizers, and many advocates of just plain peace have been thrown out of their jobs and purged for all practical purposes.

No sympathy is lost here on the Communists, of course. Japan has been and is anti-Communist. But it pains many people with liberal leanings to see that the freedom of speech and expression guaranteed by the Constitution does not apply to one section of their society. And this is taking place with the consent and blessing of the Occupation authorities. It is enough to disillusion many an honest citizen in democratic processes—for they remember well that the Communists were hounded and gagged in the heyday of Japanese militarism.

Admittedly, Japan is but a pawn in the current international struggle between the Two Worlds. The democracies fear the possibility of this nation's industrial and labor potential being teamed up with the forces of communism; but by the same token, it must be assumed that the communists fear the utilization of Japan as an Asian bastion of democracy. And surely, Japanese rearmament will not, under these circumstances, contribute to the peace of Asia. A real fear to the Japanese is that the "die-hards" will take advantage of this situation to raise the banner of rearmament and put the clock back.

JAPANESE CORRESPONDENT

Tolstoy and Dostoevsky. What Dostoevsky and Tolstoy undertook in the field of literature, and what Freud attempted, among other things, within the official domain of psychology, in exposing many of the *actual* motivations and conditions behind respectable façades, have had thousands of willing and fairly capable cooperators. Meanwhile, in the political field, skeptical-analytical influences have held back what might have been a dangerous tide of optimism in respect to national socialist planning. Many were on the lookout for the pitfalls, dangers and disillusionments of new political panaceas.

There is little doubt that the average man, in his day-to-day life, is adversely affected by the constant predisposition to disillusionment appearing in literature and entertainment. Plato would probably have thought up some kind of law to prevent the publication of books which led readers to always expect the worst from life. Tragedy, in the classic sense, had a positive meaning—there was a moral majesty to all the sufferings—but the unrelieved gloominess of many modern authors surrounds the springs of human hope with an opaque pall.

We have been wondering for some time what might be said about Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*, sometimes called "the best novel about World War II." Mailer seems a *bitter* tragedian, a brilliant but pleased-with-little-or-nothing-he-sees psychologist. In his writing we can learn about twisted personalities and how a war twists them the further; we can listen to dire prophesies of a Fascist future—and ourselves exhibit some sociological and political sophistication from all this. But we gain no real hope at all.

Mailer's men at war are a sad lot, most of them being extremely poor risks from a psychiatric point of view. The general in charge of the operation designed for capture of a Pacific island is a pure fascist type, complete with the abnormal tendencies which we have come to associate with certain erstwhile Nazi leaders. The Sergeant in charge of the reconnaissance squad is a sadist. Lust for killing seems to dominate all his emotions. Most of the other men we are privileged to view at close range, if not perverted in some fashion, have lived lives of almost unrelieved sordidness. And when we come to "Lieutenant Hearn," apparently Mailer's spokesman, we see him rising the closest to heroism when he perceives the inherent rottenness of the whole system in which he has been advancing himself. An excellent example is furnished when Hearn has had his first taste of commanding men in action. Previously shunning the unwelcome business of war and the presumption of command, he finds himself succumbing to the attitudes which he has come to despise in his fascist commander:

Leadership!

It was as filthy as everything else. And he enjoyed it now.

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### THE REAL ISSUE

OCCASIONALLY, some reader asks why MANAS concerns itself so extensively with "social" questions. As this week's leading article endeavors to point out, it is the question behind the social question which usually seems of importance, and we find it necessary to discuss the social question while trying to get behind it.

In the thirteenth century, we would, we suppose, have been eternally caught discussing problems in the vocabulary used by Thomas Aquinas and others, and carrying on at great length on the question of whether the will or the intellect has primary significance; or whether the realists or the nominalists have the greater portion of the truth. But we would also, we hope, have been trying to get behind the false-fronts of controversy, in search of the dignity of man.

There is not so much difference, really, between the medieval controversies and present-day arguments. The basic question is always: Does the individual human being play a decisive part in creating his own destiny, or is he the pawn of fate? It doesn't matter much whether "fate" is embodied in the capricious artifice of Jehovah or in the random impulse of blind natural forces. Always, the people who have broken out of the confinements of their times have been men who thought for themselves—who refused to deny their power of self-determination.

Naturally, with this view to defend, we are constantly on the lookout for conceptions of human nature which equate with essential human freedom. That is why we like to use the term "soul"—as representative of man as a free agent. That is why we are interested in theories of immortality—as the basis for a continuing moral existence for every man. The prospect of one short human existence could be seriously frustrating to a "soul" with imagination enough to conceive of endless development for human beings.

As we see it, there is man and there is the field of his experience. We are endeavoring to distinguish between them and to understand both. To lose the identity of the man in an all-powerful field of circumstantial forces is to declare for outside omnipotence—either God, or Mechanical Forces, or the State. This, we think, would be the Sin against the Holy Ghost; or, in the modern idiom, the Liquidation of Human Hope. Should we offend in this direction, our readers will, we trust, soon let us know.

### REVIEW—(Continued)

After the ambush, after the unique excitement, call it the unique ecstasy, of leading the men out of the field, he had been replaying those few minutes over and over again in his head, wishing it could happen again. Beyond Cummings, deeper now, was his own desire to lead the platoon. It had grown, ignited suddenly, become one of the most satisfying things he had ever done.

It had been there all the time, partially realized, always submerged. It had a jingle to it.

Not a phony but a Faust.

Clear enough, and what was he going to do about it? Knowing this, he had no right to go on with the patrol; objectively he was playing with the lives of the nine men left, and he didn't deserve the responsibility. If there was anything worth while left in him, he would turn back in the morning.

There was the inner smirk. *He ought to, but he wouldn't.*

The shock, the self-disgust that followed this was surprising, almost pleasing in its intensity. He was almost horrified with this sick, anguished knowledge of himself.

Here is the man who, though the strongest person in a long novel full of characters, is permitted only enough integrity to see that he is failing the best standards he knows. Why does Hearn have to fail? Because Mailer is marketing despair. The trend is downhill for Hearn, leading to a death in battle secretly hoped for and connived at by the sadistic sergeant who wishes himself to assume command of the patrol. In fact, the trend is downhill for every character in the tale without exception.

As all the personalities go "downhill" to further degradation, so, we are left to think, will the world in general go. Though Mailer has obviously had considerable conditioning as a "liberal" or a "radical," he sees liberalism as a lost cause—or, at least, this is all he permits his readers to see. "General Cummings," in one of his knowing-all addresses to Hearn, gives the keynote of what we may expect from our post-war world. This is what the general imparted:

The Right was ready for a struggle, but without anxiety this time, with no absorbed and stricken ear listening to the inevitable footsteps of history. This time they were the optimists, this time they were on the offensive. There was the thing Cummings had never said, but it was implied tacitly in all his arguments. History was in the grasp of the Right, and after the war their political campaigns would be intense. One big push, one big offensive, and history was theirs for this century, perhaps the next one.

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**MANAS is a journal of independent inquiry, concerned with study of the principles which move world society on its present course, and with search for contrasting principles—that may be capable of supporting intelligent idealism under the conditions of life in the twentieth century. MANAS is concerned, therefore, with philosophy and with practical psychology, in as direct and simple a manner as its editors and contributors can write. The word "MANAS" comes from a common root suggesting "man" or "the thinker." Editorial articles are unsigned, since MANAS wishes to present ideas and viewpoints, not personalities.**

**The Publishers**

## CHILDREN ... and Ourselves

HAVING recently called attention to a hearty denunciation (in *McCall's*) of Alan Zoll's attacks on Progressive education, we are reminded of another obligation in respect to the controversy about "subversive teachers."

In a *Reader's Digest* "original" entitled "Who Owns Your Child's Mind" (October issue), John T. Flynn raises some useful criticism of certain socialist attitudes which need to be pondered whenever one has a little time off from defending Progressive educators from Zoll type witch-hunts. While not at all sure that we would wish to trust the educational destinies of our own children to either Mr. Flynn or the *Reader's Digest*, there are points in this article which must be given their due. For, however flagrant Mr. Flynn's anti-socialist bias appears in special pleadings for his own political views, any argument, we think, should be judged on its own merits.

Mr. Flynn contends that a number of influential teachers and textbook writers in the United States are "teaching socialism." Using quotations from the works of Dr. George Counts of Teachers College, Columbia, he attempts to demonstrate that Counts and other widely known and respected men have felt it necessary to instruct the young in the necessity of a Socialist world-to-come. Flynn also quotes the late Professor Harold Laski, Socialist and influential member of the British Labor Party, who has lectured and written extensively in the United States. Laski's remarks, which certainly seem to support Mr. Flynn's argument, appeared in an evaluation of a Carnegie Foundation report on Social Science teaching, for which Dr. Counts was Research Director. Laski wrote of the report: "Stripped of its carefully neutral phrases, the report is an educational plan for a socialist America. . . . It is a direct criticism of the ideals that have shaped American capitalism." Here, of course, we have to question Mr. Flynn. Can we not give some praise to a research report which enters a controversial issue with "carefully neutral phrases"? And what is amiss in "direct criticism of the ideals that have shaped American capitalism"?

But how about "an educational plan for a socialist America"? Another of Dr. Counts' statements is typical of those social science teachers who believe that the society of the future must be socialist. He writes that the future economy will be "a planned, coordinated and socialized economy." Dr. Counts also states that emerging world-patterns indicate that we are not presented with a choice between "individualism and collectivism," but "rather between two forms of collectivism; the one essentially democratic, the other feudal in spirit." Here we approach the area in which we are forced to give Mr. Flynn some support. *To take for granted the inevitability of tighter and more complete state controls and to try to persuade the young of such inevitability is, we think, a partisan slant.*

As we see it, the American ideal in education may almost be summed up by the conviction that *nothing* is ever "inevitable." At least, it has always seemed that our Constitution and our Supreme Court hold us to a faith that men are the captains of their own souls, and not pawns of any cosmic or political forces. Neither the old "divine right of kings" nor the materialist version of the compulsion of economic forces is to be accepted, the final choice being individual, in terms of conscience and belief. If the views of respected teachers are continually instilled in children, and if those teachers show nothing but pessimism for a non-socialist system and great optimism for a socialism of the future, these children are being indoctrinated. It is indoctrination, not because capitalist society has shown no weakness and failures, nor because a tremendously increased industrialization and a tremendously increased world population do not incline towards "socialistic control," but simply because the bias in respect to the final success of a socialistic system may be challenged as pure opinion. In other words, optimism in respect to a socialistic future is the right of an individual instructor, but it is his own private faith. It may actually be, contrariwise, that a socialistic system will usher in problems of equal magnitude as those of "free enterprise"; it is *possible* that the problems will be less, but also possible that they will be greater. And this is the only thoroughly defensible "slant" in education.

The believers in socialist theory might well recognize an obligation to review the failings of past socialist experiments with the same fervor they have shown in highlighting the errors of capitalism. They might also take account of the values inherent in all back-to-the-land movements, and the values found by those individuals who have deliberately—and, they think, "progressively"—cut themselves off from the trend toward a more complete ordering of human lives through government planning. (Mr. Flynn, we may note, now writing with unusual restraint for a man who is violently opposed to all socializing trends, has elsewhere shown his capacity for at least equal error. To try to prove that "the old way is best" departs from impartiality as much as claiming that the new, socialistic, way is best.)

This leads us to our own conviction, which is simply that the job of the educator in respect to social questions is to state all the possible points of view with as much fairness as he can muster. We want young people to grow up trained in the habit of making their own decisions. To this end, teachers might best relinquish many opportunities to express their own personal views. Refusal to state opinions as if they were facts in the classroom, we hold, has to do with much more than matters of economic systems of the future. It has to do with matters of religion, it has to do with matters of philosophy and psychology, it has to do with moral standards, and above all with the supreme matter of what the human being is, and what he may become. Teachers, like other men, all have personal persuasions on these subjects. Their persuasions are relevant in the classroom, but only when they are set forth in comparison—and not propagandistic comparison.

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# FRONTIERS

## Survey of Civil Liberties

PERHAPS the most encouraging thing about the thirtieth Annual Report of the American Civil Liberties Union, covering the period from mid-1949 to the early months of 1951, is the fact that, from February 1, 1950 to January 31, 1951, the membership of the national ACLU increased by 31 per cent, making a total of 12,247 members. This Report, while not exactly fascinating reading, is the sort of survey of the practical "front" of freedom in the United States which every citizen ought to inspect at regular intervals. (Copies of the Report may be purchased from the Union headquarters, 170 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, at 35 cents each.)

The over-all situation confronting the ACLU is well described by Patrick Murphy Malin, Executive Director of the Union, in the opening pages:

Like all men, separately and corporately, from the beginning, we have an appetite for organization and an appetite for freedom. We want stability and calm, and we want change and excitement. We want internal order and external protection; we want variety and progress. We do not want weakness and anarchy, but we do not want stagnation and tyranny, either.

The ACLU seeks to obtain for all citizens the maximum freedom allowed by the laws of the land, and it opposes legislation which seems likely to serve the uses of tyranny, either potential or actual. From an abstract formulation of the problem, Mr. Malin goes to the substantial reality of the American scene:

Fortunately, the people and the government of this country come to the present crisis with admirable resources for . . . active allegiance to civil liberties. From colonial days to World War I, as Nathaniel Weyl recently pointed out in *The Battle Against Disloyalty*, "the temper of the people [was] to distrust law-enforcement agencies, to confine the power of the state to a vast minimum, and to prefer even revolution to anything smacking of despotism." From 1920 to 1950, despite the increasing difficulty of administering democratically a vast population of unexampled heterogeneity, with a fabulously intricate and dynamic industrial system and an incredibly rapid enlargement of national and international problems, we succeeded—not without dust and heat, but nevertheless convincingly—in preserving and retrieving and developing our tradition, notably in equality for labor and racial minorities.

There are of course disagreements as to the merits of the ACLU. A sizeable number of people wonder why any such organization exists and is interested in protecting the rights of persons accused of being Communists, or even the rights of avowed Communists. These people are equally puzzled when ACLU attorneys appear on behalf of fascists or the members of any unpopular minority. The point, of course, is that the ACLU is committed to the *principle* of maintaining civil liberties—which means all the liberties *secured*, not "allowed," by

law—regardless of whether the "right" people or the "wrong" people wish to exercise them. The ACLU has other critics, those who feel that the Union is either laggard or reluctant in defending what may be regarded as "extreme" positions, possibly for the reason that the organization would lose the support of many of its conservative members. There may be some justice in this claim, but the important point we should like to make, here, is that the ACLU has for thirty years kept alive the idea of *the impersonality of rights under the law*. Let us note that, without this idea, legal rights mean nothing and less than nothing, for they become the mask for the worst sort of tyranny—the tyranny which pretends to be "democratic" or "impartial" in its policies.

For a symmetrical view of the activities of the Union, the Report should be read in full. Some instances of cases reported, however, will give the reader an idea of the scope of the ACLU's interests. For example, when Senator McCarthy attacked Dorothy Kenyon, New York attorney, former municipal judge, and an ACLU board member since 1931, alleging "Communist activity, sympathy or association," the Union issued a public statement in which it was pointed out that Miss Kenyon has the record of an inveterate anti-Communist, and that the senator had "stooped to some of the lowest depths of prejudice and hysteria to smear the name of one of America's finest women who has made magnificent contributions to her country's standing in the world."

In Bartlesville, Oklahoma, a local "vigilante" committee succeeded in obtaining the dismissal of Ruth W. Brown, the community librarian for 25 years, partly because of her interest in a YWCA interracial program. The ACLU took the case into the courts.

An almost unbelievable hysteria seems to have overtaken some of the citizens of Fairlawn, N.J., where a nursery school was obliged to vacate premises leased from the American Legion, on the ground that phonograph records played to the children in the nursery were manufactured by a company whose officials were suspected by the House Un-American Activities Committee. The artists who made the recordings were also regarded as "questionable." "No issue was raised as to the content of the records themselves, nor as to their value in public school education."

In New York, the *Nation* continues for the third year to be banned from the city school libraries, on the supposition that a series of articles by Paul Blanshard was offensive to Catholic children. The ACLU argued that school libraries should promote freedom of press, not suppress it. With the help of the Union's Committee on Academic Freedom, a tax-payer's suit to remove from the school libraries copies of *Oliver Twist* and *The Merchant*



of *Venice*, held to be "anti-Semitic," was defeated by a decision of the State Supreme Court.

The report clarifies the present situation in respect to separation of Church and State. While the Supreme Court decision in 1948 in the McCollum case has prevented the use of school premises for sectarian religious education, the constitutionality of programs affording released time from the school day for religious instruction of children off school property is still being argued in the courts. Such programs are presently in operation in a number of communities.

So far, two New York State courts have refused to order released from the custody of Catholic institutions the three younger children of Hampportzoon Choolokian, an immigrant who in 1947 renounced his American citizenship and returned to Soviet Armenia. While the ACLU maintained that Choolokian was entitled to maintain the integrity of his family, regardless of his political opinions, and that his should be the deciding voice in choosing religious instruction for his children, the argument of the Catholic institutions that the children's spiritual welfare would suffer by being allowed to join their father under Soviet rule seems to have prevailed with the courts. (The children were placed in the Catholic institutions during an illness of their mother.) Meanwhile a Protestant group has started another action to have the children transferred to private homes or to a Protestant institution, in which, it is said, the religious instruction would more nearly conform with the father's beliefs.

Among problems involving the "due process of law" clause of the Constitution, the case of Lewis A. Johnson was reported. This man, a Negro, was arrested for robbery in Georgia and held there in jail for ten months without preliminary hearing, indictment, or trial. Johnson later escaped. He was apprehended in the District of Columbia and his extradition to Georgia was unsuccessfully opposed by the ACLU. The union argued that Johnson had been beaten and starved by his Georgia jailers. He was eventually returned to Georgia where he is serving a sentence after pleading guilty to a charge of robbery.

In general, the greatest progress in civil liberties has been made through the effort to obtain equal rights for Negroes. A number of southern universities have been compelled by the courts to admit Negro students, and the report adds—

It was not only through formal court orders that the segregation principle was successfully attacked. Some schools are voluntarily opening their doors to Negroes—even in undergraduate divisions. The University of Louisville is closing its all-Negro Liberal Arts college, and, beginning next [last] September, will admit these students to its hitherto all-white college. According to a New York Times survey, 1000 Negroes are now enrolled in southern schools which formerly barred them.

It is to be noted that the noisiest champions of American "freedom" and the American "way of life" are seldom found among those who grapple with the actual injustices suffered by American citizens. The preservation of freedom is not an attractive task, for it is never easy, and usually involves support to unpopular minorities or individuals holding unpopular opinions. Freedom is pre-

served by adhering to principles, and rabble-rousing methods used in the name of freedom almost always weaken our liberties instead of strengthening them. The reports of the American Civil Liberties Union afford evidence that the real enemies of our freedom are the people who advocate doing something to somebody else—punishing, deporting, or purging those they have singled out as offenders. There is always a good chance that a persecuted man or group is not heroic at all—no better than the rest of us, and possibly worse; but it is almost certain that the persecutors are as bad, or worse, than their victims.

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### HELD FOR RANSOM

(Continued)

ment we have. We work harder and harder to raise the price of our ransom. We build more tanks and planes. We hire commissions of technical experts to supervise our efforts and then hire other commissions of experts in patriotism to watch the technical experts. The more watchers we hire, the more experts we are able to suspect, and this, by some psychological sleight-of-hand, we tell ourselves, is an aspect of modern progress.

Meanwhile the price goes up. The price is the same, everywhere, and it is always going up. Conceivably, the price of what we want—the price of our freedom from anxiety, from gnawing suspicions, from haunting insecurities—is not a quantity but a principle, and that principle the one so simply expressed by Bronson Alcott: Never do for money what is not worth doing for its own sake.

There is nothing really new in this idea. At root, it is the same idea as that expressed by John Dewey and Aldous Huxley, to the effect that the means we use to reach our ends always transform those ends into the likeness of the means. The money we get from making things that are not, of themselves, worth making, will not buy anything worth while. The power we acquire by dishonest use of our intellectual faculties is power that can not be used for good.

There is never any way to save men who betray themselves in the hope of salvation. There is never any way to reform men who betray other men in order to gain power. There is no system which can change the motives of men—only the men themselves can change their motives, and only the men who believe this of their fellows can do anything to help them.

It is difficult, without being dull, to attempt any recommendations as to what "right livelihood" might mean for the members of our society. The fact, however, is that every generation of young people who reach the time when they must try to become self-supporting is confronted by this puzzling question. MANAS sometimes receives letters from young men and women who see before them only the familiar routines of commerce and industry. Reluctant to submerge their moral identity in the acquisitive-competitive stream, they are trying to look before they leap. Perhaps the way Bronson Alcott met this situation will be of interest—although, actually, it is a mistake to say he "met" this situation, for the reason that his life was so bound up with living his principles

that we doubt if he had to make a conscious "choice" in the matter. In *Pedlar's Progress*, Odell Shepard tells how Olcott spent his days, and the passage we select, while affording little detail, sums up the resulting psychological quality of his life:

We must not ignore the fact that Bronson Alcott had a calling, a profession, at which he worked hard all his days. He was a thinker, a teacher, a "Dedicated Mind"—and if America had not yet provided for the support of such a person he must not turn aside on that account from his divine mission but must make what arrangements he could. He stood ready, and eager, to give his life; and all that he asked in return was a bare livelihood. . . .

There is no evidence that Alcott ever stipulated a fee for his services in conducting Conversations arranged by others. Always he took what was offered, without a word other than simple thanks; and when he was offered nothing, as frequently happened, his thanks for the pleasure of talking with such interesting people were always forthcoming just the same. . . .

In Alcott's own life the uses of adversity were almost always sweet. He reminds one of a sentence written by his wife in one of her darkest hours: "There are some plants that must be bruised to give forth their sweetest odors." To him, furthermore, poverty was a sort of automatic good

taste. It framed his life. It kept the nomad in him from mere aimless gadding. In almost everything except the small matters of prose style and penmanship and the construction of summerhouses it prevented the full efflorescence in him of a certain tendency to the flamboyant. On the whole, then, he was a better man because he was always poor. "Blessed be poverty," he once wrote, "if it makes me rich in gratitude and a temper that rails at none." We may say with assurance that it did do so. Furthermore, it gave him long and arduous discipline in what may be called the higher generosity.

We leave it to others to list the heresies of "social theory" in this passage. But this is no championing of poverty, rather the description of how a man may make his peace with it when poverty happens to be the price he must pay for living a full, rich, and useful life. Nor is there reason for any of us to mourn that we are not Alcotts, but quite humdrum individuals with a greater penchant for plenty of bacon and eggs than for instructive "Conversations." That, of course, is the lesson of Alcott's life. Find, he says, a mission—something that you want to do more than just to make money—and then do it. And if you can't do it all the time, do it some of the time, and try to arrange your life so that you will have more and more time to do it. Here lies the dignity of man. It lies within what he does with his life; or it lies, outside, in what he doesn't do, entombed as a memory, a political slogan, a catchword of demagogues and a lying phrase on a monument to celebrate the victory of conformity, fear, and death over the creative human spirit.

#### CHILDREN—(Continued)

son—with other and different persuasions. However hopelessly idealistic it may sound, the oft-mentioned "vision" of the Founding Fathers seems clearly to have involved the hope that we will develop a universal and impartial tradition of evaluation in respect to every question under the sun. This is not to say that a man should not have strong convictions, but only that his convictions should be his private concern in relation to instruction in the public schools.

One of the most important reasons for the tendency of MANAS to laud the Great Books program in adult education is that here participants are encouraged to read in the original the best expositors of all sides of great social and historical controversies. Perhaps teachers who have read, let us say, Marx, Freud, and Thomas Aquinas, with a desire to *understand* how their widely differing convictions arose, will be best fitted to show breadth of mind in the classroom.

No one can deny that more socialized control appears to be on its way, but we need neither accept as fact that this is an irreversible trend for all eternity, and that it is more beneficial than any other current trend, nor resign ourselves to the view that individuals can do nothing more original than to "adjust" to the new patterns of life it will create.

#### REVIEW—(Continued)

The League of Omnipotent Men. . . . Out of all the vast pressures and crosscurrents of history was evolving the archetype of twentieth-century man. The *particular* man who would direct would make it certain that "the natural role . . . was anxiety." The techniques had outraced the psyche. "The majority of men must be subservient to the machine and it's not a business they instinctively enjoy."

There is much to think about here. Perhaps Mailer, like George Orwell in *Nineteen-Eighty-four*, is trying to make sure we are fully impressed with the hazards of our time. We have reason to expect that a great many men like "General Cummings" will put in effective appearances during the next quarter century. But it is going to take a great deal more than pessimism and cynical disillusionment to meet and beat those who have lost any desire to believe in "the goodness of man." An affirmative faith, in turn, cannot grow in an atmosphere of hopelessness, so that we find it even more necessary to criticize authors like Mailer for their despair than to praise them for their dark sagacity. A despairing point of view can easily influence us to expect less from ourselves and our fellows than before, while we have probably never evolved sufficient independent courage to expect enough. If we think to find ourselves or others, feeling "self-disgust almost pleasing in its intensity" and believing that "the natural role is anxiety," we will be doing our part in presenting the world to "General Cummings" on an engraved platter.

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